

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A content distribution method comprising the steps of:  
measuring a first biometric feature of a person who requests a content distribution;

performing a first comparison between first information  
5 associated with said first biometric feature obtained by the measurement and second information associated with biometric features of registered users which have been previously registered;

distributing a content only when match is made as a result of said first comparison;

10 measuring at the time of reproduction of the content distributed in said content distribution step, a second biometric feature of a person who requests a content reproduction;

performing a second comparison between third information  
associated with said second biometric feature obtained by the  
15 measurement and said first information; and

allowing said person who has requested a content reproduction to use said content only when match is made as a result of said second comparison.

2. A content distribution method according to claim 1, wherein said content distributed to a user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

3. A content distribution method according to claim 1, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

4. A content distribution method comprising the steps of:  
registering specific personal information, a user identification,  
and biometric feature information regarding a user, in a registered user

information table by making a connection therebetween;

- 5 obtaining a user identification of a person who requests a content distribution and attaining from said registered user information table first biometric feature information of said person based upon said user identification;

- 10 measuring biometric features of said person and obtaining from said biometric feature second biometric feature information;

performing a comparison between said second biometric feature information and said first biometric feature information read from said registered user information table; and

- 15 distributing a required content only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

5. A content distribution method according to claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

- 5 measuring at the time of reproduction of the content distributed in said content distribution step, a biometric feature of a person who requests a content reproduction and attaining from said biometric feature third biometric feature information;

performing a comparison between said third biometric feature information and said second biometric feature information; and

- 10 allowing said person who has requested a content reproduction to use said content only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

6. A content distribution method according to claim 5, wherein said content distributed to a user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

7. A content distribution method according to claim 5, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

8. A content distribution method comprising the steps of:  
distributing a content to a user terminal and accumulating the  
content therein;

measuring at the time of reproduction of said accumulated  
5 content, a biometric feature of a person who requests a content  
reproduction;

performing a comparison between biometric feature information  
associated with said biometric feature obtained by the measurement and  
biometric feature information of a registered user which has previously  
10 been registered; and

allowing reproduction of said content only when match is made as  
a result of said comparison.

9. A content distribution method according to claim 8, further  
comprising a step of restricting by a content distribution server, kinds of  
content to be distributed to said user terminal.

10. A content distribution method according to claim 8, further  
comprising a step of transmitting to a content distribution server content  
utilization information including at least specific information regarding a  
person who has reproduced the content and information regarding said  
5 reproduced content.

11. A content distribution method according to claim 10, further  
comprising a step of charging the user who has reproduced the content or  
providing a personal service for the user, according to said content  
utilization information sent to said content distribution server.

12. A content distribution method according to claim 11,

wherein said content distributed to a user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

13. A content distribution method according to claim 11, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

14. A content distribution method comprising the steps of:

connecting a portable user terminal to a shared service terminal which is connected via a network to a content distribution server, so as to input from a biometric feature input means equipped in said portable user terminal a biometric feature of a user who uses said portable user terminal;

performing a predetermined encryption processing on biometric feature information associated with said biometric feature inputted from said means;

transmitting said encrypted biometric feature information to said content distribution server via said shared service terminal;

performing a predetermined decryption processing on said encrypted biometric feature information received by said content distribution server;

performing a comparison between said encrypted biometric feature information and biometric feature information of a registered user which has previously been registered; and

distributing a content to said shared service terminal only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

15. A content distribution method according to claim 14, wherein said content distributed to said portable user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

16. A content distribution method according to claim 14, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a fingerprint.

17. A content distribution method comprising the steps of:

registering a user identification to identify a user and biometric feature information of the user in a registered user information table by making a connection therebetween, and registering terminal setup data to  
5 personalize a user terminal and said user identification in a terminal personalization setup data table by making a connection therebetween;

measuring biometric features of a person who requests a content distribution;

10 reading a user identification of said person from said registered user information table according to biometric feature information associated with said biometric feature obtained by said measurement;

reading terminal setup data regarding said person from said terminal personalization setup data table, according to said user identification read from said registered user information table; and

15 personalizing said user terminal used by said person, according to said terminal setup data.

18. A content distribution method according to claim 17, wherein a content distributed to said user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

19. A content distribution method according to claim 17, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

20. A content distribution method comprising the steps of:  
registering a user identification to identify a user, biometric

feature information of a user, a biometric feature identification to identify said biometric feature information, and a terminal setup data to  
 5 personalize a user terminal in a terminal personalization setup data table, by making a connection therebetween;

measuring biometric features of a person who requests a content distribution;

reading a user identification and a biometric feature  
 10 identification of said person from said registered user information table, according to biometric feature information associated with said biometric feature obtained by said measurement;

reading, according to said user identification and biometric  
 15 feature identification read from said registered user information table, terminal setup data regarding said person from said terminal personalization setup data table; and

personalizing a user terminal used by said person, according to said terminal setup data.

21. A content distribution method according to claim 20, wherein said content distributed to said user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

22. A content distribution method according to claim 20, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

23. A content distribution system comprising:

at least one user terminal including a biometric feature input means; and

a content distribution server to which said terminal is connected  
 5 via a network,  
 wherein said content distribution server including:

a registered user information table in which specific personal information, a user identification, and biometric feature information regarding a user are registered by making a connection therebetween, said  
10 personal information, user identification, and biometric feature information being inputted from said user terminal;

first comparing means for reading, according to a user identification of a person who requests a content distribution inputted from said user terminal, first biometric feature information of said person from  
15 said registered user information table, for requesting said person to input second biometric feature information, and for performing a comparison between said second biometric feature information inputted from said user terminal in response to said input request and said first biometric feature information read from said table; and

20 content distribution means for distributing a required content to said user terminal only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

24. A content distribution system according to claim 23, wherein said user terminal comprising:

biometric feature storage means for storing third biometric feature information of a registered user inputted at the time of registration  
5 to said registered user information table;

content accumulation/reproduction means for accumulating and reproducing a content distributed from said content distribution means; and

second comparing means for performing a comparison between  
10 fourth biometric feature information of a person who requests a content reproduction which has been inputted from said biometric feature input means and said third biometric feature information of said registered user stored in said biometric feature storage means, and for allowing said content accumulation/reproduction means to reproduce the distributed

15 content only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

25. A content distribution system according to claim 24, wherein said content to be distributed to said user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

26. A content distribution system according to claim 24, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

27. A content distribution system comprising:

at least one user terminal including a biometric feature input means; and

a content distribution server to which said terminal is connected  
5 via a network,  
wherein said user terminal including:

biometric feature storage means for storing first biometric feature information of a registered user inputted from said biometric feature input means;

10 content accumulation/reproduction means for accumulating and reproducing a content distributed from said content distribution means; and

comparing means for performing a comparison between second biometric feature information of a person who requests a content  
15 reproduction inputted from said biometric feature input means and said first biometric feature information stored in said biometric feature storage means, and for allowing said content accumulation/reproduction means to reproduce the distributed content only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

28. A content distribution system according to claim 27, wherein



said content distribution server restricts kinds of content to be distributed to said user terminal.

29. A content distribution system according to claim 27, wherein said user terminal transmits to said content distribution server content utilization information including at least specific information regarding a person who has reproduced the content and information regarding said reproduced content.

30. A content distribution system according to claim 29, wherein said content distribution server charges the user who has reproduced the content or provides a personal service for the user, according to said content utilization information sent from said user terminal.

31. A content distribution system according to claim 30, wherein said content to be distributed to said user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

32. A content distribution system according to claim 30, wherein a fingerprint is used as said biometric feature.

33. A content distribution system comprising:

a content distribution server;

a shared service terminal connected via a network to said content distribution server; and

a portable user terminal including a biometric feature input means connectable to said shared service terminal;

wherein said portable user terminal performs a predetermined encryption processing on user's biometric feature information associated with said biometric feature inputted from said biometric feature input means and

10 transmits said encrypted biometric feature information to said content distribution server via said shared service terminal, and wherein said content distribution server performs a predetermined decryption processing on said encrypted biometric feature information received from said portable user terminal via said shared service terminal,  
15 performs a comparison between said encrypted biometric feature information and biometric feature information of a registered user which has previously been registered, and distributes a content to said shared service terminal only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

34. A content distribution system according to claim 33, wherein said content to be distributed to said user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

35. A content distribution system according to claim 33, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a fingerprint.

36. A content distribution system comprising:

at least one user terminal including a biometric feature input means; and

5 a content distribution server to which said terminal is connected via a network,  
wherein said content distribution server includes:

a registered user information table in which a user identification to identify a user and user's biometric feature information are registered by making a connection therebetween, said user identification and  
10 biometric feature information being inputted from said user terminal;

a terminal personalization setup data table in which terminal setup data to personalize said user terminal and said user identification

are registered by making a connection therebetween;

comparing means for obtaining a user identification of a person  
 15 who requests a content distribution from said registered user information  
 table according to biometric feature information of said person inputted  
 from said user terminal, and for reading, according to said user  
 identification, terminal setup data regarding said person from said  
 terminal personalization setup data table; and

20 terminal personalization designating means for transmitting said  
 terminal setup data read from said terminal personalization setup data  
 table to said user terminal,  
 and wherein said user terminal includes:

25 terminal personalization setup means for personalizing said user  
 terminal according to said terminal setup data received from said terminal  
 personalization designating means.

37. A content distribution system according to claim 36, wherein  
 said content to be distributed to said user terminal includes music data,  
 software for video game, application software, and news items.

38. A content distribution system according to claim 36, wherein  
 said biometric feature information includes information regarding a  
 fingerprint.

39. A content distribution system comprising:  
 at least one user terminal including a biometric feature input  
 means; and

a content distribution server to which said terminal is connected  
 5 via a network,  
 wherein said content distribution server includes:

a terminal personalization setup data table in which a user

identification to identify a user, biometric feature information of a user, a biometric feature identification to identify said biometric feature information, and terminal setup data to personalize a user terminal are registered by making a connection therebetween, said user identification, biometric feature information, biometric feature identification, and terminal setup data being inputted from said user terminal;

comparing means for obtaining a user identification and biometric feature information of a person who requests a content distribution from said terminal personalization setup data table according to biometric feature information of said person inputted from said user terminal, and for reading, according to said user identification and biometric feature identification, terminal setup data regarding said person from said terminal personalization setup data table; and

terminal personalization designating means for transmitting said terminal setup data read from said terminal personalization setup data table to said user terminal, and wherein said user terminal includes:

terminal personalization setup means for personalizing said user terminal according to said terminal setup data received from said terminal personalization designating means.

40. A content distribution system according to claim 39, wherein said content to be distributed to said user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

41. A content distribution system according to claim 39, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a fingerprint.

42. A content distribution server to which at least one user

terminal is connected via a network, comprising:

a registered user information table in which specific personal information, a user identification, and biometric feature information regarding a user are registered by making a connection therebetween, said personal information, user identification, and biometric feature information being inputted from said user terminal;

comparing means for reading, according to a user identification of a person who requests a content distribution inputted from said user terminal, first biometric feature information of said person from said registered user information table, for requesting said person to input second biometric feature information, and for performing a comparison between said second biometric feature information inputted from said user terminal in response to said input request and said first biometric feature information read from said table; and

content distribution means for distributing a required content to said user terminal only when match is made as a result of said comparison.

43. A content distribution server according to claim 42, further comprising means for restricting kinds of content to be distributed to said user terminal.

44. A content distribution server according to claim 42, further comprising a user utilization information administration means for charging the user who has reproduced the content or for providing a personal service for the user, according to content utilization information sent from said user terminal.

45. A content distribution server according to claim 42, wherein said content distributed to said portable user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

46. A content distribution server according to claim 42, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a fingerprint.

47. A content distribution server to which at least one user terminal is connected via a network, comprising:

a registered user information table in which a user identification to identify a user and user's biometric feature information are registered  
5 by making a connection therebetween, said user identification and biometric feature information being inputted from said user terminal;

a terminal personalization setup data table in which terminal setup data to personalize said user terminal and said user identification are registered by making a connection therebetween;

10 comparing means for obtaining a user identification of a person who requests a content distribution from said registered user information table according to biometric feature information of said person inputted from said user terminal, and for reading, according to said user identification, terminal setup data regarding said person from said  
15 terminal personalization setup data table; and

terminal personalization designating means for transmitting said terminal setup data read from said terminal personalization setup data table to said user terminal.

48. A content distribution server according to claim 47, wherein said content distributed to said portable user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

49. A content distribution server according to claim 47, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a

fingerprint.

50. A content distribution server to which at least one user terminal is connected, comprising:

a terminal personalization setup data table in which a user identification to identify a user, biometric feature information of a user, a biometric feature identification to identify said biometric feature information, and terminal setup data to personalize a user terminal are registered by making a connection therebetween, said user identification, biometric feature information, biometric feature identification, and terminal setup data being inputted from said user terminal;

comparing means for obtaining a user identification and biometric feature information of a person who requests a content distribution from said terminal personalization setup data table according to biometric feature information of said person inputted from said user terminal, and for reading, according to said user identification and biometric feature identification, terminal setup data regarding said person from said terminal personalization setup data table; and

terminal personalization designating means for transmitting said terminal setup data read from said terminal personalization setup data table to said user terminal.

51. A content distribution server according to claim 50, wherein said content distributed to said portable user terminal includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

52. A content distribution server according to claim 50, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a fingerprint.

53. A user terminal including a biometric feature input means connected via a network to a content distribution server, comprising:

5 fingerprint-feature storage means for, at the time of registration to said content distribution server, storing user's biometric feature information inputted from said biometric feature input means;

content accumulation/reproduction means for accumulating and reproducing a content distributed from said content distribution server; and

10 comparing means for performing a comparison between biometric feature information of a person who requests a content reproduction which has been inputted from said biometric feature input means and said user's biometric feature information stored in said biometric feature storage means, and for allowing said content accumulation/reproduction means to reproduce the distributed content only when match is made as a result of  
15 said comparison.

54. A user terminal according to claim 53, further comprising a content utilization transmission means for transmitting to said content distribution server, content utilization information including at least specific information regarding a person who has reproduced the content  
5 and information regarding said reproduced content.

55. A user terminal according to claim 54, wherein said distributed content includes music data, software for video game, application software, and news items.

56. A user terminal according to claim 54, wherein said biometric feature information includes information regarding a fingerprint.

57. A computer program product comprising a computer usable



medium having computer readable program code means embodied in said medium for performing control of a content distribution system, including:

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
 5 distribution server for measuring a first biometric feature of a person who requests a content distribution;

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
 distribution server for performing a first comparison between first  
 information associated with said first biometric feature obtained by the  
 10 measurement and second information associated with biometric features of registered users which have been previously registered;

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
 distribution server for distributing a content only when match is made as a  
 result of said first comparison;

15 computer readable program code means on a computer of user terminal for measuring at the time of reproduction of the content distributed in said content distribution step, a second biometric feature of a person who requests a content reproduction;

computer readable program code means on a computer of user  
 20 terminal for performing a second comparison between third information associated with said second biometric feature obtained by the measurement and said first information; and

computer readable program code means on a computer of user  
 terminal for allowing reproduction of said content only when match is  
 25 made as a result of said second comparison.

58. A computer program product comprising a computer usable  
 medium having computer readable program code means embodied in said  
 medium for performing control of a user terminal in a content distribution  
 system, including:

30 computer readable program code means for accumulating a

content previously distributed;

computer readable program code means for requiring a person who requests a content reproduction, to input a biometric feature at the time of reproduction of said accumulated content and for performing a  
 10 comparing processing for comparing biometric feature information of said person inputted in response to said input request and biometric feature information of a registered user previously registered; and

computer readable program code means for allowing reproduction of said accumulated content only when match is made as a result of said  
 15 comparison.

59. A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in said medium for performing control of a content distribution system, including:

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
 5 distribution server for registering a user identification to identify a user and biometric feature information of the user in a registered user information table by making a connection therebetween, and for registering terminal setup data to personalize a user terminal and said user identification in a terminal personalization setup data table by  
 10 making a connection therebetween;

computer readable program code means on a computer of content distribution server for measuring biometric features of a person who requests a content distribution;

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
 15 distribution server for acquiring a user identification of said person from said registered user information table according to biometric feature information associated with said biometric feature obtained by said measurement;

computer readable program code means on a computer of content

20 distribution server for reading terminal setup data regarding said person from said terminal personalization setup data table, according to said user identification, and for sending said terminal setup data; and

computer readable program code means on a computer of user terminal for personalizing a user's own terminal according to said terminal  
25 setup data sent from said content distribution server.

60. A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in said medium for performing control of a content distribution system, including:

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
5 distribution server for registering a user identification to identify a user, biometric feature information of a user, a biometric feature identification to identify said biometric feature information, and terminal setup data to personalize a user terminal by making a connection therebetween;

computer readable program code means on a computer of content  
10 distribution server for acquiring a user identification and biometric feature information of a person who requests a content distribution from said terminal personalization setup data table according to biometric feature information of said person obtained by measuring said person's biometric features;

15 computer readable program code means on a computer of content distribution server for reading, according to said user identification and biometric feature identification, terminal setup data regarding said person from said terminal personalization setup data table, and for sending said terminal setup data; and

20 computer readable program code means on a computer of user terminal for personalizing said person's own terminal according to said terminal setup data received from said content distribution server